



FEBRUARY 20, 2011

TRAVELING COURT REPORTERS – INTERNATIONAL

Yesterday I had the pleasure of speaking at the DRA Convention in Anaheim with the great Laura Brewer, past Intersteno speed champion and international CART provider. Our topic was “Court Reporters – Travelling Abroad.”

Here are my top 10 takeaways from the session:

1. Health – be proactive and take precautions so the day you are to perform, you are not ill. Laura advises, “Don’t work on transcripts on the plane (unless you have to). Use the time on the plane to sleep.” Take precautions when eating foods and drinking water in countries that have no filtering system. (Great Tip from Laura: When in a country that you ought not be drinking the water, put a wash cloth over bathroom water faucet to stop you from unconsciously wetting tooth brush.)
2. Bring two of everything. Some international reporters even bring two writers; but bring two of everything. I have a double-laptop computer bag that I can carry on. If you are forced to check your machine case, take your writer out and put it under the seat in front of you. I have heard of nothing but disaster stories from court reporters who have had to check their machines.
3. Checklist: Tomorrow prepare a list of items you will bring when you get the call to go international so it is easy to check off what you need, and you are not stressing out if you have got everything. Add to the list as new situations arise.
4. Swearing in witnesses: Get a written stipulation of counsel that the reporter can swear in the witness on an international assignment; or attorneys need to hire a notary/official from country that you are traveling to for swearing in the witness
5. China – go to http://www.chinalawblog.com/2009/01/taking_depositions_in_china_it.html and check it out. If you attempt to depose someone in Mainland China and swear the person in, you could be thrown in jail. Know the laws of the country you are going to. I use Google to do some basic research.
6. Be Great – International depositions and arbitrations are typically very technical and many times relate to patents, complex business, and product liability. 90% of the depositions we have covered worldwide require a realtime court reporter.
7. Reality – Nine out of ten international depositions that are put on calendar are canceled, and most of them get canceled within two days before your flight is to leave. You need to be flexible.



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8. VISA – My favorite visa site is: www.itseasy.com I used this site to get my visa to travel to Russia with NCRA. The site is EXCELLENT for knowing what you need in the way of a visa, working visa, how to get a quick visa to a particular country (if you have a last-minute job).
9. Shipping of Equipment: We were advised not to ship equipment internationally (i.e. with FedEx). One reporter told of a story where her second set of equipment was stuck in customs, and she couldn't get to the equipment until after the job was over.
10. Paperwork: Bring a copy of the Commission or Order of the Court that the attorneys have procured so they can take the deposition. If you get stuck coming into the country with your equipment, having official paperwork might help you get through. In Japan, you have to have a deposition visa (when they see your steno machine, it is a red flag), and you have to have the deposition at a U.S. Embassy.

There was a ton of great information disseminated at the seminar. After we were finished, reporters came up to me and asked, "What can I do to be an international court reporter?" I suggested the reporters create a "Travel Resume" and send it to court reporting firms who do international work. I believe a "Travel Resume" should contain such things as the fact you have a passport, if you are a CRR, CCRR, RMR, et cetera; the fact that you have two of everything (list the equipment you will travel with). Let the firms know you are "READY TO GO."

Having the unique talent of being a court reporter gives you the option of traveling international for work. The key to success is being great, being flexible, and a strong desire. The world is your oyster.



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